

COMMISSIONING OF THE COAST
GUARD CUTTER "GANNET"

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 26, 2001

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, this weekend I have the honor of attending the commissioning of the Coast Guard Cutter *Gannet*, whose sponsor is Mrs. Dorothy Fuller Kleiderlein, mother of the late Robert Fuller, who died earlier this year in service to the U.S. Coast Guard as an auxilliary. I am honored to be invited to such a ceremony, not only because the U.S. Coast Guard represents the best in public service and selfless sacrifice for our fellow Americans, but because I have always been a strong supporter of the Coast Guard's vital mission.

The occasion: An occasion such as this serves to remind us of the important role the Coast Guard plays in defending our national security and protecting the public safety. Many have sacrificed for the benefit of protecting our shores, for the safety of those who travel to and from our coastlines, and for the general support our law enforcement and maritime communities gain from key cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard. But the commissioning of a new ship gives us more than a moment of reflection on the past. It is a call for renewal: renewed technology and modernized hardware, yes; but moreover, a renewed commitment to the mission, the ideals, and the goals embodied in the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard's important mission and traditions: "Group Miami" is one of the Coast Guard's busiest and most active commands. Anyone who has resided in South Florida—or even visited—can see why. Search & rescue cases, counter-drug operations, migrant interdiction, and marine environmental protection are constant, ongoing demands. This new "Marine Protector" class coastal patrol boat, a state-of-the-art 87-foot cutter, the *Gannet*, will contribute to each of the duties we call on the Coast Guard to perform. We expect those who serve our country in uniform, in every service branch, to have the benefit of the best equipment and technology available. The *Gannet* is a renewal of that commitment.

Giving the best our best: The Coast Guard's biggest asset is the people who serve, whether in active duty, as reservists, or as auxilliaries. The best people deserve the best equipment and technology we can provide. Sometimes, even the most modern support isn't enough. We know the tragedy that befell Rob Fuller and Casey Purvis. We know that even with modern technology, the Coast Guard must constantly fight the elements of nature while striving to protect us all when nature—or in some cases, human nature—strikes. But their courage and that of their colleagues must be evenly met with our unwavering support for putting the best tools into the hands of those who risk their own lives to protect us.

That is why I am pleased to call myself a supporter of the United States Coast Guard and honored to be attending a gathering to commission the *Gannet*. If we are to continue to have a strong maritime industry, waters

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safe for recreational boating and streets safe from the scourge of drugs, we must put the resources where they matter most. I look forward to working with other leaders to make that vision a reality.

IN HONOR OF REBECCA WATSON'S
DEDICATION TO TEACHING

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 26, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, today I stand before you to honor a woman that exemplifies the qualities that are greatly needed in the education system today, Rebecca Watson. A creative, caring and committed teacher, Rebecca has spent her entire teaching career shaping the minds of the students that have passed through the halls of Taylor Elementary School in Palisade, Colorado. For two consecutive years, Rebecca has been nominated for the Disney Teacher of the Year award, and although she did not receive the award last year, the compliment of a second nomination this year speaks volumes of her influence as a teacher.

Rebecca is a life long resident of the Palisade area; in fact she attended the same elementary school in which she now teaches. She also attended Palisade High School where she participated in many activities, including spending three years as a Varsity Cheerleader. Rebecca was eager to continue her education, leaving for Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado the summer after graduation, while her future classmates stayed home. During the course of her college career, Rebecca participated in a unique program by spending the summer educating young women in the correctional facilities near Denver, Colorado. The program was a great learning experience, teaching both Rebecca and the girls lessons that they could carry with them the rest of their lives.

In the 26 years that Rebecca has been at Taylor Elementary she has taught a number of grades, but kindergarten is the grade level that she has grown to love. Rebecca continued to challenge herself and received her Masters Degree in Elementary education. In addition, she attends the Kindergarten Convention for elementary teachers every year. The minute you walk into her classroom you are sent back to being a five year old once again. The class is packed with colorful Sesame Street characters illustrating the alphabet or numbers. The irrepressible Cookie Monster is everywhere, reminding students that learning is fun. She is well respected among her peers and is often sought after for advice on classroom technique. Dee Crane, principal at Taylor, calls Mrs. Watson "a real star." She compliments Rebecca on her creativity, her love of the kids, and dedication. Rebecca is not only recognized by Taylor Elementary staff, but she also received the Mesa County School District Teacher of the Year Award in 1999. The nomination for Disney's Teacher of the Year was a surprise only to Rebecca. Although she was not chosen for the honor last year, she was asked to share her ideas from the "cookie

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class" on the Disney website. This year Rebecca was nominated for the honor again. It is inspirational to know at a time when our education system is under such critical attack that there are teachers going above and beyond to insure the students leaving their class have every advantage.

Mr. Speaker, as Rebecca's husband Allen, and daughters Kelly and Jodie, along with friends and colleagues wait to hear the final word on the Disney Teacher of the Year Award, I would like to wish her luck and thank her for her efforts. If all the teachers in this great Nation would follow Rebecca's example, the education system in the United States would benefit greatly. That said, I ask Congress to honor Rebecca Watson, she is truly an inspiration to not only her Colorado colleagues, but to teachers around the country.

ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES
ACT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 26, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise on the occasion of the eleventh anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which works on protecting our citizens with both hidden and visible disabilities from discrimination.

The Americans with Disabilities Act has been protecting citizens of this great nation for the past eleven years. In fact, 52.6 million Americans live with some level of a disability. That translates into one in every 5 people. In fact, one in every eight U.S. residents has a severe disability.

This Act does not allow people to discriminate against people with disabilities and requires that necessary accommodations be made to assist the disabled. Commonplace amenities such as elevators and ramps in all new buildings were virtually unheard of before the passing of the 1990 act. What is now viewed as a regular feature in movie theaters and other venues, listening aids were once uncommon and unavailable. One of the most recent triumphs of the Americans with Disabilities Act has been the United States Supreme Court Ruling that a golf cart must be supplied to disabled golfer, Casey Martin, for his PGA Tournaments. The Americans with Disabilities Act also extends to non-physical and more often hidden disabilities, allowing at the most basic level accommodations to be made for students in schools nationwide as well as elected officials, many of whom would never have had an opportunity for public service without ADA.

Mr. Speaker, for the past eleven years the Americans with Disabilities Act has been an integral part of this nation. As such, the Americans with Disabilities Act is more than worthy of receiving our recognition today. I hope that all my colleagues will join me in commemorating this truly remarkable law.